

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 and 18-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Anderson, et al. (European Patent No. 0498249) in view of Rossini (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,420) and Wallace (European Patent No.. 0023788).

Pursuant to a telephone interview with the Examiner on July 19, 2004, claims 5 and 22 have been amended to include the limitation that each of the webs has a first shrinkage percentage in a longitudinal direction and a second shrinkage percentage in a lateral direction and the splice has a third shrinkage percentage in a lateral direction and a fourth shrinkage percentage in a longitudinal direction, with the first shrinkage percentage of the continuous web substantially matched the third shrinkage percentage of the adhered splice tape and the second shrinkage percentage of the continuous web substantially matched the fourth shrinkage percentage of the splice tape. This feature is not taught or suggested by any of the cited references. In view of the telephone interview with the Examiner, Applicant believes the Examiner agrees that the addition of this limitation places claim 5 and 22 in condition for allowance. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification at page 4, line 17 through page 5, line 30.

Claims 2 and 6-11 depend from claim 5. Thus, these claims should be allowable for the reasons set forth with respect to claim 5. All remaining claims other than claims 2, 5-11, and 22 have been cancelled.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the foregoing remarks, the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. An early notice of allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner believes, however, that direct communication would advance prosecution, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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